

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

REVIEWED BY D. Cohen DATE 2/17/87

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SECRET - PERSONAL - INFORMAL

Dear George,

I am leaving tomorrow to return to Moscow. Since the President has replied to your telegram, which I appreciated receiving, there is perhaps no need for me to reply separately, but I thought I might give you a few of my own thoughts.

In general, I agree with your point that Khrushchev's moves over Berlin and Germany have been mainly defensive, arising out of the failure of the East German regime. But I attach importance, as does Chip, to his public statement to the Congress putting off the deadline. This is probably related not only to the evidence of our willingness to negotiate but also to the "correlation of forces." I don't think they have an answer to the Polaris and, moreover, you will doubtless have seen in the public press (Joe Alsop, Drew Pearson, and others) that there has been a reappraisal here of Soviet ICBM capabilities very much downward.

I think the Soviet military has been able to successfully exert pressure on Khrushchev on military matters such as atomic testing. I also think that under the way the system now operates Khrushchev himself allows, if not encourages, discussion at the top over policy. But he is still capable of putting his own views through whenever he wants to. The Chinese stance is, however, something he must always worry about.

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The Honorable
George F. Kennan,
American Ambassador,
American Embassy,
Belgrade.

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The latter ~~will~~ probably have to be broken completely in such case and in view of the dilapidated state of East Berlin the financial need would be even greater. If one considers —

[other supports such as pension funds, orders placed in West Berlin to help it out, etc., the financial problem could soon be very large indeed.

These are hasty thoughts and if time permits I will elaborate when I get back to Moscow, provided the SO negation does not misfire and eliminate us from consideration. (My guess is that they will not actually fire it.)

Best regards to Annaliese.

Sincerely,

Llewellyn E. Thompson

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